

NOTICE OF MOTION FOR AN AWARD OF ATTORNEYS' FEES

United States District Court for the District of Maryland
J.O.P., et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security, et al.
Case No. 19-cv-01944-SAG

MORE INFORMATION: <https://nipnlg.org/work/litigation/jop-v-dhs>

If you were determined to be an “Unaccompanied Child” (referred to as an “Unaccompanied Alien Child” in the immigration laws); and you filed an asylum application with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (“USCIS”) by February 24, 2025 that has not been adjudicated on the merits; and at the time of filing the asylum application with USCIS you were 18 years or older or had a parent or legal guardian in the United States available to provide care and physical custody; then you might be part of a class action settlement.

A federal court approved a Settlement Agreement in a class action lawsuit called *J.O.P. v. DHS*, Case No. 19-cv-01944-SAG (D. Md.), on November 25, 2024. The *J.O.P. v. DHS* lawsuit is about the rights of people seeking asylum with USCIS who were previously determined to be an “Unaccompanied Child.”

Counsel to the Plaintiffs and the Class (“Class Counsel”) are now asking the Court to order the federal government to pay Class Counsel’s reasonable attorneys’ fees and expenses for their work on this lawsuit. **This notice describes the request for attorneys’ fees and expenses.** This notice does not describe Class Members’ rights under the Settlement Agreement; a notice in Spanish and English providing that information is available on the above webpage.

What is the *J.O.P. v. DHS* lawsuit about?

J.O.P. v. DHS is a class action lawsuit that was filed in federal court in Maryland in July 2019. The Plaintiffs claimed that a 2019 policy created by the federal government about how to treat asylum applications filed by people previously determined to be an “Unaccompanied Child” was unlawful. Under that 2019 policy, USCIS rejected the asylum applications of people in immigration court removal proceedings who had “Unaccompanied Child” determinations if they no longer met the definition of “Unaccompanied Child” on the date they filed the asylum application—even though under the policy that came before the 2019 policy, USCIS accepted such applications. Under the challenged 2019 policy, USCIS also applied a one-year filing deadline to the asylum applications of individuals with previous “Unaccompanied Child” determinations if they no longer met the definition of “Unaccompanied Child” on the date they filed their asylum application—even though under the policy in place before the 2019 policy, USCIS held such applications exempt from the one-year deadline.

The Court appointed as Class Counsel lawyers from the nonprofits Kids in Need of Defense, Public Counsel, Bet Tzedek, and the National Immigration Project, and the private law firm Goodwin Procter.

The Plaintiffs and the Government subsequently reached a Settlement Agreement, which the Court approved on November 25, 2024. You can find out more about the *J.O.P. v. DHS* case and read the Settlement Agreement by visiting this webpage: <https://nipnl.org/work/litigation/jop-v-dhs>.

What is this Notice about?

Class Counsel is asking the Court to award them reasonable attorneys’ fees and expenses for their work on this lawsuit from 2019 through 2024. Class Counsel performed all work on the lawsuit at no cost to the Plaintiffs and the Class. If the Court approves the request, the fees would be paid to Class Counsel by the federal government at no cost to Plaintiffs or Class Members.

Class Counsel are lawyers with experience in federal lawsuits and in unaccompanied children's asylum law and practice. Class Counsel are seeking \$1,830,206 in fees and \$4,812 in expenses.

An award of attorneys' fees will not change, delay, or impact in any way the approved Settlement Agreement in this case. The Settlement Agreement has already taken effect.

What should I do in response to this Notice?

You do not need to take any action in response to this Notice. However, if you are a *J.O.P.* Class Member, you have the right to submit a written objection to Class Counsel's fee motion.

If you wish to submit an objection, please mail it to the United States District Court, 6500 Cherrywood Lane, Greenbelt, MD 20770, or file it in person at the Clerk's Office of either the Baltimore or Greenbelt federal courthouses. The objection must clearly identify the case name and number: *J.O.P. et al. v. U.S. Department of Homeland Security, et al.*, Case No. 8:19-cv-01944-SAG. **It must be filed in person or postmarked on or before February 18, 2025.**

The Court will consider any timely objections received and decide whether a hearing is necessary to determine the amount of fees and expenses to award.

Where can I get more information?

This notice does not provide a complete description of the lawsuit, the Settlement Agreement, or the request for attorneys' fees.

You can read the entire motion for attorneys' fees at this webpage: <https://nipnlg.org/work/litigation/jop-v-dhs>.

If you want to know more about the *J.O.P.* Settlement Agreement, you should read the full Settlement Agreement and talk to your immigration lawyer, if you have one. You can read the Settlement Agreement:

- A. By visiting this web page:
<https://nipnlg.org/work/litigation/jop-v-dhs;>
- B. By accessing the Court docket in this case, for a fee, through the Court's Public Access to Court Electronic Records (PACER) system at <https://ecf.mdd.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/iquery.pl>;
- C. By visiting the Clerk's Office of either the Baltimore or Greenbelt federal courthouses during business hours; or
- D. By contacting Class Counsel at the following email address to request a copy: DG-JOPClassCounsel@goodwinlaw.com.